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“ The centre of the hurricane also passed over Mount Armstrong, in the county of Kildare, the residence of Christopher Rynd, Esq., about eighteen miles due west of Dublin. I was at his house on the 19th of April, and saw the devastation committed on all sides of his premises, as well as the bare walls of an out-office, from which the roof had been carried in one mass into the air, and then dashed to the earth at a distance of 200 yards. The following is the substance of a written account of the occurrence by Mr. Rynd :

“ ‘ The first appearance of change of weather was from distant thunder, and occasional flashes of lightning, at a quarter past 3 P. M. This continued about a quarter of an hour, when suddenly a terrific hail storm commenced, and lasted about ten minutes. Before it ceased a frightful rushing sound, like the escape of steam from a large steam engine, was heard; and then, just as the hail ceased, the hurricane commenced. My yard of offices and house form a perfect square, and, to the best of my belief, every side was simultaneously attacked; and one large new roof (indeed they were all new) was completely raised in a mass,—timber, ton-slates, and wall-plate,—and carried 200 yards into a field. There was no storm of wind at 300 yards on either side; it travelled in a narrow space, and caused no other damage worthy of notice in my neighbourhood.’ ”

Mr. Donovan read the following paper on the position in society of physicians amongst the Greeks and Romans :

“ The condition of the physicians of ancient Greece and Rome has been a subject of controversy amongst writers on medical antiquities, some maintaining that they were all slaves, while others were of opinion that a limited number only were of the servile class. A passage in Suetonius’ *Life of Julius Cæsar* has given occasion to his commentators to open the question; and some learned physicians, for the honour of their profession, have discussed it more extensively, and with much greater effect.

The passage is as follows : ‘Cæsar, having been captured by pirates near the island of Pharmacusa, was detained by them for forty days, with one physician and two servants; for he had sent away his companions and his other slaves to obtain money for his ransom.’ The words in the old copies are ‘cum uno medico et cubiculariis duobus.’ Plutarch, in alluding to the circumstance, calls the physician the friend (*φίλον*) of Cæsar; on which account, Robertellus altered the text from ‘uno medico’ to ‘uno amico,’ assigning as his reason that the physicians of Rome were slaves, and that therefore it was improbable that Cæsar would cultivate or permit an intimacy with one of that condition. Cæsar, however, might have been of the opinion of Epicurus and Seneca, that slaves are no other than friends of a more humble class. Eudemus is called, by Tacitus, the physician and friend of Livia. But Philippus Bercaudus adopted the correction, and also the statement that ‘in ancient times the physicians were amongst the number of slaves:’ he says that ‘competent authorities have decided the point, and chiefly Seneca.’ Several others, on the same authorities, have arrived at the same conclusion; amongst whom may be numbered J. J. Hoffman (Lex.), Forcellini, and Faciolati (Lex.), and C. F. Hermann. On the other hand, the learned Casaubon, commenting on the reading of Robertellus, says : ‘In the first place, it is false that all who then professed medicine at Rome were slaves; many Greeks, excelling in that art, frequented Rome for the profitable practice of their profession; some of them having been rendered free, and others being not only free themselves, but the sons of freemen (*ingenui*).’ ‘It is most false that the physicians were not received in the relation of friends by the Roman magnates.’ He then gives instances where they were admitted to the friendship of emperors.

“The object of Casaubon being merely to restore what he conceived to be the true reading of his author, he has not brought forward the evidences which were within his reach,

for the purpose of defending the profession of medicine against the stigma of a degrading origin. And although Le Clerc and Drelincourt have undertaken that task, aided by an unusual share of erudition, they have not exhausted the subject. It is the object of the present communication to adduce a few additional considerations.

“During the earliest periods, medicine was, no doubt, cultivated in the East, along with other sciences ; was thence imported into Egypt, and soon became a part of the studies of the priests. As the records of all remarkable cures were deposited in their temples, they had opportunities of acquiring medical knowledge, and they frequently used it with good effect. The ancient Egyptians were more than any other nation addicted to the care of health, which gave occasion to the sneer of Herodotus, that they were all physicians : but Diodorus Siculus says that no one dare publicly profess medicine unless admitted into the order of priests. That there were servile persons, however, who dabbled in medicine, appears from holy writ : ‘And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father.’

“Amongst other nations of antiquity, there were neither physicians nor an acknowledged code of medicine, nor did the priests interfere in medical affairs. Whatever knowledge of remedies existed was diffused amongst the population, and this, when necessity required, was rendered available in the following singular manner : ‘The Babylonians’ (says Herodotus) ‘have no physicians by profession, but those who are diseased, being brought into the public places, whoever passes the sick man advises with him concerning his disorder, and if he has himself, at any time, laboured under the same complaint, or known one affected in the same way, recommends the remedies by which he himself or others were cured. To pass a sick person without inquiring his complaint is deemed a breach of duty.’ The splendid city which could boast of a hundred brazen gates could not produce one physician.

“The same usage obtained in Egypt and at Rome. In the latter place, it was the practice to carry the sick to the forum, in order that the opinion of passengers might be taken on his case; but this practice gave way to a different one.

“In subsequent times, it was the custom of wealthy persons, in Greece and Rome, to employ such a vast number of slaves that Seneca compares them to armies; and he describes the duties of some of them to be of a disgusting character. Amongst the most useful of the functions performed by slaves were those of physicians, surgeons, and compounders of medicine; many such are mentioned by the ancient Roman and Greek writers, a few examples of which it may be proper to cite. Suetonius, speaking of Domitius, the fourth ancestor of Nero, says, that having taken poison in his despair, he so much feared the death which he had previously sought, that he discharged the poison from his stomach, and rewarded with his freedom the physician who had so skilfully and prudently rendered it innocuous. Seneca tells the same thing more plainly; he says, ‘Domitius commanded his slave, who was also his physician, to give him poison (*medico eidemque servo suo*).’ Suetonius quotes an epistle of Augustus to Agrippina, in which he says, ‘I send you also one of my slaves, who is a physician.’ Pliny the younger was cured of a dangerous disease by Harpocras, whom he expressly describes as ‘a slave, although a physician.’

“We have also a proof in Cicero’s Oration for King Deiotarus, who was accused of an attempt to procure the assassination of Julius Cæsar, on the evidence of one Phidippus, whom Cicero declares to have been the physician as well as the slave of the king. There is a passage in Diogenes Laërtius, which proves not only the identity of the slave with the physician, but alludes to the purchase of such a physician.’ Diogenes the Cynic, being offered for sale as a slave, was purchased by Xenias. Diogenes, in his usual insolent manner, said to his new master, ‘See that you do what I order you.’

His master answered by a trivial quotation, to which Diogenes replied : ‘ If you, being sick, were buying a physician, would you have so answered ? ’—‘ A physician, although a slave, certainly ought to be obeyed.’ Of the words made use of, *ιατρος* and *δουλος*, applied to the same individual, there can be no misconception. Paulus Orosius has been quoted to prove that all physicians at Rome were slaves ; but without reason, for he evidently copied from Suetonius, and by his collocation of the words has perverted the sense. Orosius, therefore, is not an authority.

“ Thus in Greece and Rome, for at least four centuries, it is a well-attested fact, that slave physicians were maintained in families. The greatest confidence was sometimes reposed in them, even by crowned heads. The Emperor Augustus had a physician named Antonius Musa, who had been his slave, and to his care he intrusted himself when, as Suetonius informs us, he was ‘ *distillationibus jecinere vitiato ad desperationem redactus* ;’ which probably means that his disease was a vitiated secretion of the liver, although Pliny says it was inflammation of the bowels. Musa, finding that warm fomentations did not succeed, tried cold baths, and gave him cold water draughts, all of which, we learn from Suetonius and Celsus, was considered a dangerous experiment. He also ordered his royal patient to eat lettuces. Augustus submitted, such was his confidence in his former slave’s skill, and he recovered. Musa was rewarded with much wealth ; was honoured by the Senate with a brazen statue placed near that of Esculapius ; was permitted to wear a gold ring, which none were hitherto entitled to the use of but magistrates and those persons called ‘ *ingenui* ;’ and for his sake the same permission was granted to all persons exercising the medical art in the city. Such were his rewards for a prescription of lettuces and cold water. He practised the same treatment on Horace, who survived ; but another patient, Marcellus, was

killed by the experiment.* It is a curious example of the kind of practice employed by the slave physicians.

“There can be no doubt that Rome and Greece abounded in these humble practitioners; and although the healing art was, in this respect, a servile occupation, it was held in high estimation. Plutarch’s encomium on it was, that ‘it is second to none of the other liberal arts in wealth, splendour, or enjoyment; it liberally bestows on its cultivators good health and a sound constitution.’ M. Cato respected physic but despised physicians, and did not employ them; he wrote a medical treatise for his family, and treated their diseases himself.

“But, beside these slaves, we find Greek and Roman physicians mentioned in ancient history, who certainly had never been of the servile class, and who maintained the highest rank as citizens. Pliny has given an account of a succession of physicians who practised in Rome, but he never once alludes to their having been slaves; although the abhorrence in which he held the medical tribe would certainly have induced him to say anything to their disparagement that truth warranted. The regular physicians were of such rank in their profession, that they derived considerable incomes from their practice; some were entitled to draw from the public exchequer annually to the amount of 250,000 sesterces, or £2010 of our money. Quintus Stertinius, a physician, complained of the emperors whom he served, for allowing him but 500,000 sesterces, or £4020 a year, while he received from private individuals in the city, who retained him as their medical adviser, 600,000 sesterces, or £5824 per annum. His brother received a similar sum from Claudius Cæsar. The two brothers bequeathed to their heirs no less than 30,000,000 sesterces, or £291,200. A physician named Charmis stipulated, for

* In order to convince Musa (says Dio Cassius) that he had arrogated to himself what was the work of fortune and fate. It was thought by some that Marcellus was poisoned.

the cure of one patient, to be paid 200,000 sesterces, or £1941. Erasistratus, being consulted on the case of Antiochus Soter, received 100 talents, which in Syrian money would be equal to £807 5s. 10d. of our's. It need scarcely be observed, that such men as these could not have been slaves. We have a very different account of a physician's fee in some verses preserved by Diogenes Laertius, where it is said to be one drachma for a visit, or in our money seven pence three farthings. Perhaps this was the fee of a slave physician, when not prescribing for his master.

“A fact stated by Pliny, incidentally, assigns the reason that slave physicians were so common; he says, ‘that although in other professions a strict inquiry was instituted with regard to competency, there was none in the case of physicians:’ hence any one, no matter how ignorant, might practise as such. But those who intended to qualify themselves regularly for the profession of medicine, became, according to the custom of the times, the pupils of experienced teachers. Thus, Themisson was pupil of Asclepiades; Serapion of Alexandria studied under Herophilus, pupil of Praxagoras; Erasistratus was pupil of Chrysippus; Prodicus, of Hippocrates; and Hippocrates, of Democritus. The prince of physicians derived part of his knowledge from the tablets in the temple of Esculapius at Cos, on which were recorded all remarkable cures. The temple was, in some time after, burned, along with its records; but the latter were preserved in the memory of Hippocrates, so far, at least, as related to dietetic medicine; for Strabo mentions, that cures effected by that kind of practice were those he selected. Many of the regular physicians studied in the celebrated university of Alexandria, founded 320 years before the Christian era, where students could avail themselves of the best instruction which the world then afforded. There were in its library, at one time, no less than 700,000 volumes, the unfortunate fate of which is well known. Up to this time, no dissections of the human body

had taken place ; the horror with which the Egyptians and other nations viewed the desecration of the dead had hitherto deprived medicine of the light of anatomy. But Ptolemy not only instituted human dissections, but, horrible to relate, ordered dissections of living criminals. Tertullian charges Herophilus with having been the perpetrator ; Celsus admits the fact, and defends it, on the principle that the tortures of a few guilty persons were allowable for the benefit of the whole innocent race of mankind. Perhaps it was on the same principle that Louis II., of France, permitted the surgeons of Paris to perform the terrible operation of lithotomy on condemned soldiers, in order that the operators might acquire dexterity with the knife.* Such was the character of the medical school of Alexandria, that to have studied there was, in the time of the Emperor Valens, deemed a sufficient warrant for commencing practice.

“Considering all these facts, the conclusion might be drawn, that the regular physicians of antiquity were very different persons, in opportunities and acquirements, from the slave physicians. It is singular that in the language of the Greeks and Romans no verbal distinction was made in the names expressive of the two grades ; and it is probably this defect that occasioned the misconception of modern writers with regard to the supposed degraded state of the whole class of ancient physicians.

“The class of regularly educated practitioners were men of learning and elegant accomplishments. To their ordinary professional acquirements in philosophy, medicine, surgery, *materia medica*, and pharmacy, they frequently superadded rhetoric, oratory, and poetry. Many poetical disquisitions are extant, of great merit as poems, although occasionally on very undignified subjects. Zeno of Athens wrote a poem on a gout-medicine ; Marcellus composed one on medicine in

* Mangeti Bibl. Script. Med. 1731.

general, in forty-two books. Damocrates favoured the world with a poetical effusion on the humble subject of a kind of diachylon plaster: he gave all his prescriptions in iambics. Andromachus, physician to Nero, dedicated to his royal master a poem descriptive of the celebrated confection which went under his name, although really invented by King Mithridates. This practice was not confined to the Romans; the Indian philosopher, Shehab Addeen, whose era is unknown, wrote a poem on pharmacy, in three hundred stanzas of Tamul verse, the poetry of which, Ainslie says, is much esteemed. Such poems were not uncommon amongst Oriental writers.

“The regularly educated physicians of antiquity, far from being slaves, were the friends and associates of persons of the most exalted rank in all civilized countries. Avicenna was physician and grand vizier to the Sultan Magdal Doulet, and the companion of princes and nobles. Mesue was the fourth in descent from Abdela, king of Damascus. Menecrates of Syracuse was physician and friend of Philip of Macedon. Democedes of Crotona, the founder of the reputation of the faculty of Crotona, was the medical adviser and constant guest at the table of Darius the great.

“Crowned heads did not think the study of medicine beneath them. King Solomon was well versed in medical botany; his ‘History of Plants’ is said to have been burned in the library of Alexandria. King Antiochus invented an antidote to all sorts of poison, the composition of which was engraved on a stone at the entrance to the temple of Esculapius. Attalus, the last king of Pergamus, invented several useful formulæ, which have descended to us. Mithridates, king of Pontus, as already stated, invented the celebrated confection. Juba, the second king of Mauritania, wrote a book on the virtues of herbs; so also did Evax, a king of Arabia, which he dedicated to Nero. Nero himself dabbled a little in medicine. The imperial reprobate, during his nocturnal wander-

ings through the streets of Rome, used to get involved in pugilistic contests, and would then return home with one or two black eyes, and a face of all colours. He compounded for himself an ointment consisting of deadly carrot, frankincense, and wax, with which he smeared his face, and next morning was free from all evidence of the fistic dexterity of his subjects. Agrippa, king of the Jews, invented an ointment for debility of the nerves, which incumbered the pharmacopœias of Europe until a few centuries ago. The emperor Adrian possessed considerable knowledge of medicines and pharmacy ; he invented an antidote against all sorts of poisons. The emperor Justin dictated a formula which continued in use for a thousand years.

“The prophet Esdras, while in exile at Babylon, composed a medicine which consisted of no less than one hundred and fifty ingredients, and one of these contained forty others. It would have shortened the prescription had he ordered a little of all the known medicines in the world to be mixed. This compound was in medical use until a few centuries since. St. Paul was also the inventor of a formula which has been preserved by Nicolaus Præpositus.

“Until the days of Hippocrates medicine was studied as a branch of philosophy. According to Ælian, the Pythagoreans not only studied medicine but practised it; so also, says the same authority, did Plato and Aristotle. Pythagoras gave a tolerably good formula for certain stomach complaints. Democritus, returning from his travels, wrote a book, in which he gave a prescription to enable parents to have handsome, virtuous, and fortunate children : miserably for the votaries of beauty and worth, the prescription is lost. Chrysippus and Dienchus each wrote a book on the virtues of wild cabbage. Hippocrates dis severed the connexion between philosophy and medicine, and from his time the latter began to be studied as a separate art. ‘Ubi desinit physicus incipit medicus,’ says Aristotle. Eminent persons still, however,

cultivated medicine as a branch of a liberal education. It was in this way that Virgil studied the art.

“From the facts and considerations adduced, it appears that several centuries before the Christian era, and for some time after it, an inferior kind of medicine was practised as a servile or domestic art; in the same way as cookery, with which Plato continually compares it (Gorgias). It appears also that the higher departments were originally those of the philosophers, from whom it passed into the hands of an equally learned and respectable class, who thenceforward professed medicine only. The arrangement was natural and convenient. To possess a domestic, always accessible in case of emergency, who understood at least the incipient treatment of disease, was undoubtedly a source of satisfaction and security in a family, so much so that one is led to suspect the existence of this state of things long before and after they are alluded to in historical records. Traces of this usage are recognisable in comparatively late times; history informs us that in the courts of the ancient princes of Wales there was always a physician of so humble a grade that even the mead-maker took precedence of him.* This personage looks very like the old slave-physician.

“But it is to be inquired how these slaves acquired whatever medical knowledge they possessed. In ancient times, medicine, surgery, and pharmacy, were professed by the same individual; but the variety of processes indispensable in pharmacy rendered the employment of menials always necessary. Throughout the writings of the ancient physicians, allusion is frequently made, sometimes by name, to these operators, who were always slaves. If we had no positive authority for supposing it, probability would lead to the belief that they were the slave physicians, or their instructors.

“But we have positive information on the subject in one

* Henry's England, vol. ii. p. 362.

of the dialogues of Plato, which elucidates the whole system of the practice of medicine by regular physicians and by slaves; and it is singular that those who defended the medical art should have overlooked a passage which would have at once decided the point at issue. The dialogue is supposed to be between an Athenian and a Cretan. I extract as much of it as is sufficient for my purpose:

“‘ATHENIAN.—We say that some are physicians, and others the servants (*ὑπηρέται*) of physicians; and these last we likewise call, in a certain respect, physicians. Do we not?

“‘CRETAN.—Entirely so.

“‘ATHENIAN.—And do we not call them so, whether they are free or servants, who, through the orders of their masters, have acquired the art of medicine, both according to theory and experience, but are not naturally physicians like those who are free, who have both learned the art from themselves, and instructed their children in it; or do you consider them as forming two kinds of physicians?

“‘CRETAN.—Why should I not?

“‘ATHENIAN.—Do you therefore understand that when, in a city, both servants and those who are free are sick, servants are for the most part cured by servants (*δουλοῖς*), who visit the multitude of the sick, and are diligently employed in the dispensaries (*ιατρείοις*), and this without assigning or receiving any reason respecting the several diseases of servants; but what they have found by experience to be efficacious, they tyrannically prescribe for their patients, as if they possessed accurate knowledge, and this in an arrogant manner, hurrying from one diseased servant to another, by this means facilitating their master's attention to the sick. But the free-born physician, for the most part, heals and considers the diseases of those that are freeborn.’*

“Such was the state of things three centuries and a half

* Taylor's Translation.

before the Christian era. This dialogue establishes the fact, if there were no other proof, that there were two kinds of medical practitioners in ancient Greece, regular physicians and slave physicians, clearly distinguished by the terms *ιατρος* and *δουλος* in Plato's dialogue, although comprised under the word physician. The slaves derived their knowledge by acting in the dispensaries or shops of their masters; the slaves attended on slaves, the physicians on the free-born; the former practised empirically; the latter investigated symptoms and causes. That the same usage obtained in Rome appears from the authorities already adduced, and by the well-known tendency of the Romans to adopt Greek customs.

“The condition of medicine, and its practice in Greece and Rome, have been always involved in doubt and obscurity by the conflicting statements of ancient historians, which Le Clerc and Danet do not appear to have succeeded in reconciling. Pliny says that for more than 600 years from the foundation of the city, that is, until the year 218 B. C., there were no physicians in Rome, a sufficiently improbable assertion. On the other hand, Dionysius of Halicarnassus says, that during a dreadful pestilence which raged in Rome v. c. 301, there were not physicians enough to attend the sick, which proves there must have been physicians there. The history of Dionysius was written about a century before that of Pliny, and was therefore well known to the latter. Had Pliny understood that the persons alluded to by Dionysius were intended to be represented as regular physicians, he certainly would have made some observation on a statement so completely at variance with his own. It appears that the cause of the apparent confiction between the two historians is, that when Pliny said there were no physicians at Rome for 600 years, he meant regular physicians; and when Dionysius mentioned the inadequate number of physicians during the pestilence, he meant slave-physicians, which Pliny well understood, and therefore made no comment.

“By admitting the view of the subject here advocated, we reconcile another historical confliction which has been ineffectually attempted to be explained. The Athenians had a law which declared that ‘no slave or female should learn the art of medicine.’ But abundant proof has been adduced that slave-physicians were not uncommon in Greece. The law did not prohibit slaves from being the assistants of physicians, and therefore could not prevent their casually acquiring whatever medical knowledge might fall in their way. As reported by Hyginus, the edict enjoined that ‘ne quis servus disceret artem medicam;’ the meaning probably being that the slave should not undergo the regular course of study and discipline of the art, and thus put himself on a footing of equality with the rank of the regularly qualified physician. An edict professing to restrain a slave from learning, that is, hearing and remembering what he heard, would be as impossible in its administration as absurd in its conception.

“On the whole, I conceive that all historic records concur in showing that the real profession of medicine was never one of slavery; and that it has never been otherwise than honourable and elevated, being studied by poets, philosophers, holy persons, monarchs, and men of learning.

“Perhaps Apuleius places the slave-physician in his true position, when he says, ‘Themisson noster servus’ (not the pupil of Asclepiades) ‘*medicinæ non ignarus*,’ qu. dic. not altogether ignorant of medicine.”